



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 24th INFANTRY DIVISION (MECH) and FORT RILEY
FORT RILEY, KANSAS 66442-5000

REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF

AFZN-GA-AS

28 Aug 2004

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Fort Riley Retiree Council

Call to Order: A meeting of the Fort Riley Retiree Council was called to order by the chairperson, MSG (Ret) Michael L. Heronemus, USA, at 1020 hours on 28 Aug 2004.

Invocation: CH (MAJ, Ret) Kenneth H. Edmiston, USA, gave the invocation.

Pledge of Allegiance: MSG Heronemus led council members in reciting the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

Minutes: The minutes of the council's meeting on 10 July 2004 were approved.

Committee Reports:

Membership Committee – BG (Ret) Thomas J. Kennedy, USA, announced that all positions for retired military members on the Retiree Council were filled. COL (Ret) Verlyn Steinkruger, USA, indicated that he would ask Mrs. Mary Sue Moore, widow of a former commander of Irwin Army Community Hospital, to fill the widow's vacancy on the council.

Discussion:

a. MSG Heronemus introduced LTC (Ret) Kenneth F. Steggeman, USA, as the new Adjutant General at Fort Riley. LTC Steggeman informed council members of the civilianization of the AG position. The position now falls under the Garrison Commander who works for the Installation Management Agency. The G1 position remains military under the Chief of Staff and Commanding General.

b. BG (Ret) Dayle E. Williamson, USA, discussed a meeting recently hosted by U.S. Congressman from Nebraska Lee Terry and attended by Veterans Administration Secretary Anthony Principi. An information sheet with highlights of meeting's question and answer session was distributed to council members. Essentially, more and more dollars are going to the Veterans Administration, but there are more and more veterans among whom they must be spread. A major effort ongoing is the centralization of all DOD medical records.

c. BG Williamson then discussed an E-mail he received from the Nebraska National Guard Bureau. It took note of the difficulties currently being faced in providing military funeral honors to deceased veterans. The Nebraska National Guard modeled its Military Funeral Honors Program after one at Fort Knox that was successful. The E-mail proposed collaboration between the Nebraska National Guard and the Casualty Assistance Office at Fort Riley for their mutual benefit. LTC Steggeman indicated interest in following up on the proposal.

d. MSG Heronemus introduced COL (Ret) George S. Webb, USA, Executive Director, Kansas Commission on Veterans' Affairs. COL Webb gave a short presentation on the purposes of his office, i.e., to inform veterans of benefits such as veterans' hospitals, homes, education programs and cemeteries. He acknowledged the need for a veterans' cemetery at or near Fort Riley, but indicated that it might not be on

line before 2007. While the VA would acquire the land and establish the cemetery, eventually it would be turned over to the State of Kansas to fund and operate thereafter. COL Webb suggested that we seek help from our state legislators to provide funding for the operation of the state's veterans' cemeteries.

e. MAJ (Ret) Max W. McAllister, USA, verbally shared the content of several documents relating to Federal legislative affairs he had received. He also noted the tremendous amount of construction currently ongoing on Custer Hill. MSG Heronemus said that \$80 million was in the budget for Fort Riley, and that the arrival of a brigade of the 25th Infantry Division in FY 2005 was expected to add 3,400 troops and 1,700 families to the area.

f. Ms. Kathy Cunningham-Tucker, RSO, discussed final preparations for Retiree Appreciation Day 2004 (RAD '04). Again this year, the Manhattan Chamber of Commerce will furnish the coffee and donuts. Council members were assigned duties and copies of the RAD '04 program were distributed. Members were notified that Riley's Event Center had reopened and likely would be the site of future RAD's. Ms. Cunningham-Tucker indicated that once she paid the bills for RAD '04, there would be practically nothing left in the Retirement Services Office account. MSG Heronemus indicated that fund raising could be addressed at the next Retiree Council meeting.


g. CSM (Ret) Juventino Rodriguez, USA, commented that the law requiring employers to restore reservists and National Guard members to the civilian jobs they vacated when they were called to active duty was not being enforced when they were discharged. LTC Steggeman said that an avenue did exist for relief. He suggested that reservists and guard members contact Ms. Gail Gibson, Director of Veterans Employment and Training through the Veterans' Employment Representatives at local Veterans Administration centers.

h. Ms. Cunningham-Tucker mentioned that retirees now are authorized to purchase Army PT uniforms.

i. CH Edmiston encouraged all council members to register, and to get out and vote.

Adjournment: There being no further old or new business to conduct, the meeting adjourned at 1125 hours. The next meeting will be on 4 December 2004.

JACKSON HOAGLAND, JR.
LTC (Ret), USA, Recorder


MICHAEL L. HERONEMUS
MSG (Ret), USA, Chairperson


KATHY CUNNINGHAM-TUCKER
DAC, Retirement Services Officer